

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed July 12, 2004, claims 20-34 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, and claims 20, 21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,348,061 to Riley et al (hereinafter "Riley et al.").

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 1-19 and 35-44 are allowed, and that claims 22 and 25-34 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph and include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the amendment presented above, Applicants have amended claims 20, 24, 25, 26 and 28 to address the issues identified by the Examiner with respect to the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is now moot.

With regard to the 102 rejection based on the Riley et al. reference, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's analysis. More particularly, claim 20 recites, *inter alia*, that "at least one particular group has a plurality of storage containers only one of which is filled at a time." Nowhere does Riley et al. teach or suggest this feature. In contrast, the accumulator staging sub-sections 72, 74, 76, 78 of the Riley et al. system are filled in parallel. Col. 5, line 65-78 and col. 6, lines 2-5. They are then dumped in parallel or serially into the vials 18 as the vials pass beneath the vial filling member 102. Col. 5, line 67 to col. 6, line 2. Thus, the Riley et al. reference fails to teach or suggest important limitations of claim 20. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 20 is patentable over Riley et al.

The dependent claims 21, 23 and 24 are patentable over Riley et al. for those reasons advanced above with respect to independent claim 20 from which they respectfully depend, and for reciting additional features neither taught nor suggested by

Riley et al. For example, claim 24 has been amended to recite "a counter that counts tablets discharged from a primary storage container that stores a large number of tablets ..." Nowhere does Riley et al. teach or suggest such a counter.

In light of all of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in order for allowance, and prompt allowance is earnestly requested. Should any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record so that the case may proceed expeditiously to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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